



PRESS RELEASE

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MEXICAN NATIONAL SENTENCED TO OVER 12 YEARS IN PRISON FOR DRUG CHARGES

TUCSON, Ariz. – Felipe Nery Ramirez-Valle, DOB 4/24/75, of Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced to 130 months in prison to be followed by a consecutive 18-month term in prison by U.S. District Judge Frank R. Zapata in Tucson, Ariz. in September 2004.

On December 23, 2003, Border Patrol agents monitoring an infrared surveillance camera observed three SUVs enter the United States from Mexico through the desert terrain in Douglas, Ariz. Agents from U.S. Border Patrol and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement responded and observed the vehicles traveling westbound on Highway 80 at a high rate of speed. Agents successfully deployed tire deflation devices in an attempt to stop the vehicles, but the drivers failed to yield. Two vehicles returned to Mexico but the third vehicle, driven by the defendant, continued northbound with three spiked tires. Agents followed the defendant's vehicle until it crashed into a mesquite brush. The occupants fled and were found approximately 200 yards away lying face down underneath a mesquite brush.

Ramirez-Valle was found guilty by a jury on July 9, 2004 of Possession with Intent to Distribute and Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute 1,269 pounds of Marijuana in violation of Title 21 U.S.C. Sections 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B)(vii). The defendant was also sentenced to a consecutive term of 18 months in prison for violating the terms of his supervised release imposed in 2000 after he was convicted of Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana.

The investigation in this case was conducted by agents from ICE and Border Patrol in Douglas, Ariz. The prosecution was handled by Susan A. Baumann, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-04-0141 and CR 00-342
RELEASE NUMBER: 2004-172 # # #